

Jotirao Phule: Shetkaryaca Asud
translated by Gail Omvedt and Bharat Patankar

A brief introduction to Phule:

Jotirao Phule (1827-1890) is considered a founder not only of the anti-caste movement; in Maharashtra also he is looked upon as a of the farmers' movement, the women's movement, and a bahujan-oriented environmental movement. He was born in a Mali (gardener jati) community of Maharashtra, and educated first in his village, then in Pune, a city which had been formerly the capital of the Brahman-dominated independent regime, but which was at that time the centre of cultural and political stirrings. He quickly became disillusioned with the Brahman leadership of the nationalist movement, and instead embarked on a career as social reformer intending to awaken the "Shudras and Ati-Shudras" to their slavery and their destiny. His initial efforts involved starting schools for untouchables and girls. Then in 1875 he founded the Satyashodhak Samaj or "Truth-Seekers" society, his answer to the various Prarthana and Brahmo Samajes which he continuously mocked. Its purpose was to encourage the education of both boys and girls, fight priestly domination, especially by organising social-religious ceremonies without them. This gained some influence in Bombay and in Pune district, and he collected around him a group of young radicals, mainly Malis in the city, but Maratha-Kunbis from the rural areas. In 1881 his major critique of the joint exploitation of the Shudra and Ati-Shudra peasantry by the British and Brahman alliance in the bureaucracy, Shetkaryaca Asud ("The Whipcord of the Cultivators") was published.

This is one of three short books (the others are Gulamgiri, or "Slavery"; and Sarvajanik Satya Dharm Pustak, or the "Book of the Universal Religion of Truth" – the translation of titles is Phule's own). He also wrote poetry, numerous tracts, and small plays. I have begun with Shetkaryaca Asud because it is the most comprehensive of Phule's work: it gives an account of the extortion by Brahmans in religious festivals throughout the year; of the Aryan defeat of the indigenous inhabitants (Phule was perhaps the first to turn the "Aryan theory" upside down and use it to explain Brahmanic control; though we should note that Ambedkar disagreed with him), then of the exploitation of "Shudra and Ati-Shudra farmers" by the British and Brahman bureaucracy, then a minute description of the living standards of his farmers; then his own suggestions along with a condemnation of the swadeshi movement which was beginning at that time.

A word about Phule's language: it is raw, powerful, not simply colloquial Marathi but very cutting, so much that RSS-wallas even today have called it "obscene." But his use of language is excellent and his vocabulary extensive. Even more, his power of description is often extremely minute; as the description of peasant households given in chapter 4 will show. This makes translation difficult; I owe much to my husband Bharat Patankar (who has the advantage of coming from a peasant household himself in appreciating Phule and his language), but he could spare little time from his current activities in organizing dam evictees, drought stricken peasants, Vidrohi Sahitya Sammelan and so on. I am responsible for all mistakes and again it should be emphasized that this is ONLY A DRAFT. QUOTE AT YOUR OWN RISK!

Gail Omvedt

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Chapter 2: Since the white government bureaucrats are mostly in a stupor due to their life of luxury, they have no time to get any information about the true condition of the farmers, and their overall carelessness allows Brahman employees to dominate all the government departments. Because of these reasons, the farmers are so much looted that they have no bread to fill their stomachs or clothes to cover their bodies.

Chapter 3: How the Arya Brahman arrived from Iran and history of the Shudra peasants; and how the current government constantly levies all kinds of new taxes on the farmers with the aim of providing whatever pay and pensions their employees want; and how the farmers have been forced into arrant indebtedness since their wealth is extracted with such great cunning.

Chapter 4: The contemporary condition of agriculture and the farmers.

Chapter 5: Our suggestions to the Arya Bhat-Brahmans regarding the Shudra farmers and the remedies which the current government should follow: --

In writing this Asud I have had numerous discussions with so many gentlemen: among these two are noteworthy and are given here:

- A special so-called Maratha
- A Shudra saint of the Kabir cult

Chapter 3

How the Arya Brahmans arrived from Iran and the prior condition of the Shudra peasants; and how the current government constantly levies all kinds of new taxes on the farmers in order to provide whatever pay and pensions their employees want; and how the farmers have been forced into arrant indebtedness since their wealth is extracted with such great force.

In all this inaccessible, inconceivable, empty expanse of space, countless stars along with their planets are created and destroyed in the commingling of various kinds of substances. In the same way, as each planet revolves around its sun, from the mutual intercourse of one mother and father on those planets, one child may be born stupid and another intelligent. We can conclude from this that stupidity and intelligence are not hereditary. Similarly when a woman and man have intercourse, the fetus is formed according to the merits and defects of the two and from the dominance of truth and other meritorious qualities on their minds at the time. That is, various children of one mother and father are born with different qualities. Those who don't agree with this principle can't explain how the wisdom and courage of Thomas Paine of the eminent gentlemen of England and George Washington of the American farmers have shamed by their actions our merry and happy Rajas and Maharajas who say that wisdom and courage are hereditary. Besides, there are numerous examples before us of many ignorant black soldiers who show the manliness to fight like heroes in Egypt and Kabul only to fill their stomachs and because of the dread of a court martial, and similarly so many American educated men like Parker and Meriyam who were only farmers by birth have shown courage against enemies in battle for their country. From this it is proved that courage and cowardliness are not hereditary but are dependent on a person's nature and social environment. Because if this principle is held to be false, then how is it that some of those who are Rajas and Maharajas or Badshahs on the earth have ancestors who were hunters, some herders, some peasants, some mullas; some were rebels, some clerks, some valets, some bandits and some ancestors were like Romulus and Remus who were banned from their own country. None of them have original ancestors who were hereditary Badshahs or Rajas.

Now, if it can be said that, as according to Darwin's view, a fresh species of human beings must have evolved on the planets revolving around in an evolutionary process from species of monkeys, then this proves wrong the notion that all have arisen from the limbs of Brahmadev. Anyway, in whatever way a pair or pairs of human women and men were

created or first emerged whether from one couple, as according to the views of the Buddhists or Jains; or from monkeys according to Darwin's opinion; or whether they were created from the dust by God according to the views of Christians, or whether the four castes have emerged from the limbs of Brahman as according to the views of the Arya Brahmans, then in any case they must have spent their nights in the cavity of huge trees or in the crevices of mountains, and began to satisfy their hunger from fruit and roots; and when they took rest under the shadow of some tree in the heat of the day to get relief from the burning sun, then here and there the tall tall craggy peaks and the expanse of mountain ranges with their pure white caps reaching to the skies must have fallen upon their view. And below them in vast fields in large and small valleys and dales were gigantic ancient expanding banyans, pipals and crowds of fruit trees hung with pineapple, mangos, coconut, figs, pistachios, cashews and other fruits and nuts. Over these various kinds of vines of grapes and other fruit provided a thicket of networked arches; and here and there bunches of ripe bananas and various kinds of brightly colored fruits were dangling. Where they sat various kinds of leafy flowered heaps had fallen on the ground, making a huge decorated carpet with here and there various types of profuse leafy fruited trees, all appearing as if newly planted that very day. Similarly, everywhere besides streams, brooks, creeks and rivers, big and small, were spread out muskmelons, watermelons, gourds, cucumbers, and here, there and everywhere the pure clean water flowed endlessly, muttering gurgling and melodious babbling-Brahmansling words. Around in a water universe of lakes of all sizes, flocks of humming bees buzzed in brightly colored lotuses, and herons stood sanctimoniously on one leg to catch whatever fish they could spy in the bottom of the pools. In the nearby forests, wherever they looked, herds of timid deer and sheep and other prey could be seen running panting to save their lives from wolves, tigers and other beasts of prey. And on the trees numerous birds, singing sweet songs that would put Tansen to shame, were engrossed in their own melodies, as in the skies falcons and hawks and other dangerous birds plunged to snatch their lives; and just then from the west came a cool and soft breeze bringing with its touch the scent of all kinds of flowers and occasionally letting loose a melodious song. Seeing all this, how joyful must have been the ancestors of all those human beings who today call themselves Buddhist, Christian, Mahar, Muslim or Brahman! However, since they didn't have the knowledge of how to make tools of various kinds or clothes for their bodies, they must have left their beards and hair long and let the nails on their hands and feet grow long and had to live naked. Since they didn't have the knowledge of making pots of earth or metal, wouldn't they have had to kneel near the water and put their mouths to drink like animals or drink it by taking it in their

hands? Since they had no knowledge of frying pans or stoves, where would they have been able to taste bhakri or chapattis? Since they had no facilities or knowledge of skinning sheep or goats, didn't they have to walk barefoot? Where would those who couldn't count up to 100 without a mistake get the knowledge of how to roast cattle or animals for a yagna and eat them while chanting in the intoxication of some soma juice? In short, at that time they must have been so ignorant that we cannot imagine what they would have done if some buffoons or rogues had brought before them a book like the Vedas etched on palm leaves that provided no fragrance or juice when taken in hand. Since they themselves were fruit-eaters, how would they have followed the instruction of those demon-written Vedas and gotten intoxicated with Soma or eaten the meat of cows stolen from others in the name of honoring their ancestors? indeed, they had no need to do this. Being themselves so holy, how could they have liked to consider as their own lineage the writers of such self-interested scriptures? Would it have been possible for them to say to each other, "You are a Buddhist," "You are a Christian," "You are a Muslim," "You are a Mahar and so inferior," or "You are a Brahman and hence superior"?

In any case, after some time passed, after the offspring of our original ancestors had increased greatly, they must have raised up a framework of the branches of trees and laid sheets of coconut leaves on top of it for a house for separate families, and around it they made a fence of babhul or karandi branches; and on the path going inside they placed a matted door or a boundary of small stones to mark the gates. And in order to prevent dangerous wild animals from entering at night, they chose a boundary guardian to be a watchman; and now all the villagers inside, men, women and children, must have begun to sleep peacefully at night. And because of this all villagers to this day give a donation of bhakri morning and evening to the watchman of the walls in repayment for his labour. And in the same way, don't all of us rural people today give, not a piece of bhakri but a substantial contribution to the Police Fund in order to maintain the great employees of the Police Department along with the peons? What is the difference between the two? The Mahar has a stick and rope in his hand, and the policeman has a cudgel with a leather thong.

In any case, in the earlier villages if there was some trifling offence by the children or young people, the disputants were brought forward and all the adults of the village would sit in the shade of some tree and give judgement and punishment to the offenders. At that time, where did they have the knowledge to build some great town hall or assembly? However, some time later as all the families kept growing, various kinds of disputes about using the

forests or about beautiful women also began to take place; and when these couldn't be settled amicably, then some modest, serene gentlemen among them must have taken their goods and small children on their backs and gone with all the women and men in procession far away to different places in the country and built new villages there. And since they began to live with great happiness and joy, those gentlemen with daring who went first to far lands and made new settlements were called "patils" and "deshmukhs" by those of all the other villages, and people began to act according to their advice. And even though the ignorant patils and deshmukhs of today are slavishly submissive to the Bhat-Kulkarnis and incite quarrels among the villagers following their wishes, still all the villagers behave in consultation with them. Another evidence is that when the need to have wedding relations comes, we have a practice of asking one another in this way: "Question – what is your village and what is your surname? Answer – our village is Pune and our surname is Jagtap. Question – Then how are you related to the Saswad Jagtaps? Answer – we are the same, seven or eight generations must have gone by; our original branch came from Saswad to Pune, and today we go to Saswad for the first haircutting ceremony of our children, because their and our chief goddess Satwai is the same and their gods and goddesses are the same as ours. Question – then we can very easily have marriage connections, because the Saswad Jagtaps are our relations; just tell us the exact connection from there and it's as good as done; the rest of the discussions can be finished in an instant and the wedding invitations can be brought out immediately." If things have really happened in this way, then if it should be asked, what is the authority for this in the Shastras? my answer is this – How would those victorious Arya people who came from Iran to this country in the lust for gold and destroyed all the original local protectors (rakshas) and let loose one campaign after another against the remaining Dasyu people,⁴ finally making them into (Das)⁵ slaves and tormenting them in all ways, write the true history of the defeated whom they had made into Shudras in their shastras?

⁴ John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, page 196. "They appear also to have been a fair complexioned people, at least comparatively, and foreign invaders of India, as it is said that Indra (the God of the Ether or firmament) divided the fields among his white complexioned friends after destroying the indigenous Barbarian races, for such there can be little doubt. We are to understand by the expression Dasyu, which so often occurs and which is often defined to signify one who not only does not perform religious rites but attempts to harass their performers. The Dasyus, here mentioned, are doubtless the Dasyas of the Parsi sacred writings, and the Dakyas of the Behistia tablets, rendered by 'countries' or 'provinces' probably of an exterior position to be the Goim and Gentiles of the Hebrews. They were not altogether Barbarians, for they had distinctive cities and other establishments of at least a partial civilization, though the Aryas, lately from more bracing climes than those they inhabited, proved too strong for them."

⁵ John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, page 29. "Of the Dasyus mentioned often in the Vedas in contrast with the Aryans, no such traces can be found, though they are once or twice

Later after much time had passed when all the villagers could not live on only fruit, they must have begun to hunt fish, animals and birds in order to survive; then when their subsistence could not be got from these either, they began to do a bit of agriculture and they must have got good harvests. Then, after some more period had passed as they started inventing various new tools and implements and ploughs, they must have planted province after province. As this went on and as population increased, battles must have started throughout the country over claims to forests and grazing land and over boundaries of the provinces, and with that great destruction and killing must have taken place. It must have been very difficult to suppress this by gathering together the people of the whole province to make decisions. In the end the resolution of the crisis came by starting the custom that the people of every village would choose some wise and informed person from their village and these would all gather in one place to consider the problem and give a decision by majority vote. From that time, the practice got fixed among our people of having an elected panches give a decision on the most serious disputes. Then after some time when cultivators began to go beyond the Atak river to make settlements and sow their crops, and everywhere due to the limitless increase in the population and migration, the crops got affected in so many places because of scanty rainfall, and since all the rivers, canals and streams started drying up, all the animals and birds of the forests began to leave for wherever water was available. Seeing human beings falling helpless everywhere due to starvation, some daring fellows made most of the innervated hungry people into their servants and, taking them along, first organized huge looting expeditions in nearby prosperous lands, fixing their grip on the people under their control, and schemed to become Rajas over others. (If we begin to research the antecedents of today's royal families, we will find most of their original men are from this background). In order to manage them, the villagers throughout the country selected intelligent representatives, and with their help organized an army sufficient to protect the whole country, and levied taxes sufficient to maintain it; and made an arrangement to choose tahsildars and chaprasis to collect them. Due to this the people throughout the country must have gotten some relief.

Later, after some time, since prosperity had spread everywhere, beyond Bali's place, that is beyond Baluchistan, many defiant and greedy representatives, seeing the splendor

mentioned by Manu. The word Das, derived from dasyu, ultimately came to signify a bondman. In this sense it has its analogue in our word slave, derived from the Slavi people, so many of whom have become serfs in the modern regions of their abode. Some of the names of the Dasyus and other enemies of the Aryan race mentioned in the Vedas seem to have been of Aryan origin; but we see from the non-

achieved by the bandits, decided to become Rajas of their own country and the hold of the previous democratic regime got weakened. The representatives of the 96 clans in the 56 countries on this side of Iran established their separate kingdoms and with each other's mutual help began to manage their affairs without disturbance. Because of this for hundreds of years there was no obstruction to their prosperity, and all the subjects in the kingdoms of the Dasyus, Astiks, Ahirs, Asurs, Ugras, Pishachas, Matangas⁶ became happy there must have been "smoke of gold" everywhere. Not only this; since the Dasyus were extremely powerful among them, their weight was felt on all the Yavanas so much that most of the Yavanas behaved with friendship and a sincere heart towards the Dasyus. Because of this the Dasyus helped them in every way and would graciously inquire after them. From this some of the Yavanas must have started considering the Dasyus as friends; but the remaining Yavanas and Aryans and others began to behave deceitfully towards them and when the time came used to openly trouble them, and when the Dasyus must have confronted these bad habits to check them, the Yavanas and Aryas must have gotten the general habit of considering the Dasyus with antagonism as enemies and evil. Because the underlying common meaning in the words for "friend, enemy, and wicked" (*dost*, *dushman* and *dushta*) can be found in the term "Dasyu."

In the end all the Iranis (Aryas), Turks and other Yavanas could not easily endure the fame of the Dasyus, and among them the "people of eighteen turbaned castes" who wore eighteen types of turbans of eighteen different colors, began to attack the land of the Dasyus from time to time in the hope of looting the gold. However, the vigilance of heroes with King Bali like Kalabhairav and Khanderao on the border prevented them from making any impression.

At this point, when bows and arrows were newly invented by the Aryans in Iran, many daring marauders like Varaha appeared among the local Iranis,⁷ and after destroying wealthy Rajas and Rajwades of all sizes in the nearly 56 countries,⁸ the Aryan Narsinha beguiled the immature mind of the young prince Prahlad and with his help intrigued to

Sanskritic elements in the Indian languages that they must have belonged principally to various immigrations of the Sclythian or Turanian family of the human race."

⁶ Godbolyancya Maharashtra Deschachya Itihasatil Bhandarkaranci Sucna, page 1, column 2; John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, page 28

⁷ John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, pages 17-18.

⁸ John Wilson's India Three Thousand Years Ago, pages 20-21. Among peoples hostile to the Aryas we also find noticed the Ajasas, Yakshas, Shigravas, Kikatas and others. The enemies of the Aryas are sometimes expressly mentioned as having a black skin. "He (Indra) punished men for wanting religious rites tore off their skin. The Pishachas are said to have been tawny colored."

murder his father. Later the Aryan Waman defeated the great heroic Dasyu Baliraja on the battlefield, looted the gold from all the bodies of all the women and the treasures of the palace on the third day. Because of this the Dasyus undertook many battles to throw the Aryan Brahmans out of the country. However, finally the Arya Parashuram,⁹ unleashing one after the other twenty-one campaigns against the Dasyus living throughout this country, brought them to such rack and ruin that in the end many heroes from among them had to flee along with their families on the trail which goes from China to the American forests (which was flooded by the ocean after some time, and which today is called the Bering Straits) on the other side of the world in “Patal”.

(This can be seen because so many of the indigenous people there have religious beliefs, customs and practices very similar in many respects to those of the Dasyus (Shudras). Among the Americans, clans like the Suryavanshis, Rakshasas and Astiks are found. They respect omens as do people here. Among those people, as among Shduras, the practice of dressing the dead and burying gold along with them is found. Though all Shudras have become propertiless today, still like the American Shudras they bury their dead with costly spices. Among them,¹⁰ as here, such names as “Topaji, Manku, Artil Yellapa, Artil Balappa” are found. There is a province called Kanada there. However, after some time the Chinese or Aryans, attacking people here, must have forced them to submit; because like the Aryans in Hindustan, they excluded the original people in America from access to knowledge, deprived them of all human rights and treated them as inferiors, while taking themselves as “gods on earth,” and it seems that along with the planets in the sky they used to do puja to the five principles like Aryans.

In any case, in the violent confrontation with Parashuram, the sword-wielding caste ancestor of the Arya Nana Peshwe,¹¹ all the children of the dispossessed widows of the main great enemies (maha-ari) who fell in the battlefield were slaughtered by Parashuram and many clans were destroyed, and all the remaining fighting Dasyus were made into the two categories of Shudras (Das) and Atishudras (Anudas), and the Aryan Brahmans, in order to

⁹ John Wilson’s *India Three Thousand Years Ago*, page 49. Dr. John Muir, in his “Original Sanskrit Texts,” pages 44-56, has given a series of passages sufficient to prove that according to the traditions received by the compilers of the ancient legendary history of India (traditions so general and undisputed as to prevail over even their strongly hierarchical predispositions), Brahmans and Ksatriyas were at least in very many cases, originally descended from one and the same stock. Some of the cases referred to by Dr. Muir are the same as those of the parties mentioned in the first paragraph of this note.

¹⁰ W.H. Prescott’s *History of Peru and Brazil*, Vol. 1, page 66; Volume 2, appendix no. 1, pages 157, 159 and 156.

¹¹ *A Sepoy Revolt*, by Henry Mead, pages 135, 136 and 137.

give them all kinds of harassment, made many selfish and tyrannous “laws.” Among them some written points can be found in pitiless and partisan books such as Manu’s. These are:

“Arya Brahmans should never live in those cities where the Shudras rule; Brahmans should give no knowledge of any kind to the Shudras; not only that, but our Vedas should not even be heard by the Shudras’ ears. Aryas should not make any trip along with a Shudra in the early night or early morning. A Shudra’s corpse can have permission only to be carried out of the southern gate of the village. Shudras are forbidden to touch an Arya Brahman’s corpse. Even if a Raja dies agonized with hunger, he should not take taxes or land revenue from a Brahman. However the Raja should give yearly grants to Brahman wise men. If a Brahman finds some treasure, he should enjoy it alone. Because a Brahman is master of all. However, if a Raja finds treasure, he should give half the wealth to the Brahmans. If an Arya Brahman commits any crime, he should be only banished, without any blow at all to his body. Brahmans should keep Shudras as their servants and bondsmen, since God has created Shudras in order to serve Brahmans. If a Brahman find that a certain Shudra has become useful for some delicate work of his and frees him from slavery, any Bhat-Brahman who wants can capture him and make him a slave. Because God has brought him to birth for this. If a Brahman begins to die of hunger he should take whatever he needs from his Shudra slave. A Raja should never take the wealth of a Brahman without heirs; this is an ancient law. However, if he requires the wealth of those of any other caste without heirs, the Raja should take it. Even if a Brahman gentleman consciously commits a crime, he should at most be banished along with his family. But if the same crime is done by anyone of another caste, he will have to bear physical punishment according to the nature of the crime. If a Shudra’s children begin to starve because he does not get service in a Brahman’s house, he should gain his subsistence through manual labour. Even an intelligent Shudra should not accumulate much wealth. Because if he does, he will become proud and begin to condemn the Brahman. A Brahman should never ask for any alms from a Shudra, because if a Brahman does a Homa ceremony from this alms, he will become a Chandala in his next birth. If a Brahman kills a dog, a cat, an owl or a crow, this will be considered the same as killing a Shudra and he will become purified by doing the Chandrayan penance. If a Brahman kills a boneless animal, or if he kills a thousand animals with bones, it will be sufficient for him to do the Chandrayan penance. If a Shudra hits an Arya Brahman with a stalk of grass, or if he pulls his dhoti

around his throat, or if in speaking he obstructs him or if he speaks to him with scornful words, he should fall prone in front of the Brahman and beg his pardon.”¹²

Besides this, various kinds of articles about the Shudras are found in the books of the Arya-Brahmans that are so tyrannous that I feel ashamed even to write them here. In any case, after that the Aryans, in order to manage undisturbed the cultivation of the land that they had conquered, appropriated many timid and pusillanimous people like Prahlad from among the Dasyus, who never sided with their own people in maintaining hatred for the Brahmans. They were appointed as Kulkarnis throughout the villages and brought into their religion. From that the habit of calling them Deshastha Brahmans was started, because the skin color and bodily form, customs and original ancestors venerated by the Deshastha Brahmans and the original Shudra people here are similar. There has also been no marriage exchange at all between the Deshastha Brahmans and the Konkanastha Brahmans. However, the previous Peshwe government began to custom of exchange of food and daughters with the Deshastha Brahmans.

Bringing this system into implementation, as the Arya Brahmans became lords of the land here and their influence began to be felt over all the rest of the people of their varna, they began to be called the superior Brahman gurus of the 18 varnas. And they themselves, conscious that after “making heaven and hell one and departing,” no duty remained for them, instead of dressing in palm leaves, rubbing copper-colored earth on their chests, forgetting to slap their upper arm (like wrestlers), taking every opportunity for bribes, applying sandalwood fragrance on their bodies and saffron on their foreheads, drawing a musk tilak, they began the days of sitting happily enjoying themselves. Some of them lost themselves in the intoxication of marijauna, and some in the addiction of writing various kinds of selfish books. Some fell into the meddlesome industry of searching out the ways of yoga, and the rest began to propagandize, each calling the other, “Brahman gurus are superior among the 18 varnas.” Around that time, the Arya Brahmans began to harass the jungle-wandering paupers here to get them to accept their religion. As a result, these became angry and began to write various kinds of books against the Aryas and since they began the puja of their atmaling near them in order to deride the Arya religion, the Lingayat religion must have arisen as a separate religion.

¹² The Laws of Manu, son of Brahman, by Sir William Jones, Vol VII, pages 398 and Vol VII, page 33, 42, 73, 79, 85, 105, 106 and 118.

After that the Arya Brahmans began to treat with disdain all the Kshudra peasant slaves who had come under their control. They completely stopped giving them education and brought their condition below the level of animals. And since they became illiterate and completely without access to knowledge, the Arya Brahmans plunder them so much on religious and political excuses that even today, compared to them, it can be easily proved that even the condition of the violently enslaved Abyssinians in America was better. However, more recently, some centuries ago the Muslim regime here had with compassion forcibly converted lakhs of Shudras and Atishudras of this country to Islam and made them fellow Muslims, freeing them from the snares of the Aryan religion. This is clear because reports show that among them many ignorant Muslim mullas and bagvans do their marriages according to the custom of the Shudras and Atishudras here. In the same way, the Portugese government had made thousands of Shudras and Atishudras and Brahmans into Roman Catholic Christians by force, freeing them from the fabricated Arya religion and making them happy. That is why we find among them so many have family names like Gokhale, Bhosle, Pawar and other surnames like Brahmans and Shudras. Today with the help of Americans and others, thousands and thousands of moaning Shudras and Atishudras, disdaining Brahman religion, have consciously and willingly struck a blow by accepting the Christian religion, as we have seen with our own eyes. Perhaps you are not certain of the sorrows of these Shudras and Atishudras; if you only take a little thought of what calamities have befallen even such great Rajas and Rajwadas from among the Das farmers as Satara's Shivaji Maharaj, Baroda's Damajirao Gaikwad, Gwalior's Patilbuwa, Indore's Lakhya Bargir, Yashwantrao and Vithojirao Holkar, because of being illiterate, you will get an idea of the situation, and with this I finish this part.

In any case, Rajas of the fifty-six countries here abandoned the democratic regime described above, and because of that the Arya Brahmans were able to bring total ruin to the Dasyus and others, and have caused much destruction up to today. There is no doubt that this was a proper punishment; in contrast, the Greeks from beyond Iran had from the beginning maintained carefully the republican regime. Later, when the main braggart of Iran, Xerxes, brought with great pomp and show an army of lakhs to devastate Greece, and camped on the borders of Greece, then three to four hundred patriotic soldiers of the city of Sparta came one by one at night through the Thermopylae pass and made a surprise attack on their camp, and confounded their army forcing them to drag themselves back to Iran. When this model was taken up by the Romans in the land of Italy, they won through the republican

regime such superiority in education, wisdom and wealth compared to all the European, Asian and African lands that great orators and patriotic warriors like Scipio were created among them. Defeating generals like Hannibal of Africa, they established their rule everywhere. Later they took the knowledge of clothing to the barbarian English and others who had worn leather and painted their bodies in red and yellow in the islands of Great Britain in the western sea, and after four to five hundred years gave them the lesson of republicanism and brought them on the proper path. Then among the Roman nobles the great warrior Julius Caesar, sacrificing six hundred thousand Roman soldiers in his round of battles, won victory over the hereditary rulers of so many countries and became so bedazzled with his own grandeur that he became estranged from the original republican regime and got the intention of making all the beloved children his slaves and becoming the ruler over all. At that time the great holy patriots, with one gentleman named Brutus among them, who felt that they could not bear the human destruction that would come from this monarchical power, took daggers in their hands and stood to block the path of Julius Caesar while he was going towards the republican Senate hall with the intention of setting his throne in it. Then when Julius Caesar confronted him eye to eye, Brutus felt extremely abashed and covering his face with his toga, without taking any account of their mutual friendship thrust the dagger into Caesar's stomach in order to free his countrymen from the future monarchical shackles, and his corpse fell to the earth. However, Julius Caesar had previously used the money of the government treasury to win over all the others to his side. Because of that most of the indolent nobles there had become his dependants, and things fell everywhere into turmoil, the constructions of the republican regime crumbled and at the end of the regime of twelve Caesars in the annihilation of the glory of the Romans, the Romi people left the English and others free in their own lands and came back to their Italian country.

However, at that time the Scotch, Saxons and others living nearby the English, being extremely mischievous, mixed some hereditary chieftains and rajas into that republican form of government, just as sterling gold is adulterated with some copper and brass, and made a great savory stew out of it and got everyone to agree to this. Since there were mountainous areas here and there in that country, there was not enough land for everyone to survive from agriculture; the cold was extreme; thus all were doing various kinds of artisanship and merchant trades and went to the forefront of all the peoples on the surface of the earth in acquiring education, knowledge and wealth. At the same time, the disciples of Hazrat Mohammad Paigambar in Arabasthan annihilated the original political splendor of the

Aryans in Iran, and made various forays into Hindustan to take under their control the whole land of those chewed up by Brahmans. Afterwards the Muslim Badshahs became stupefied listening to Tansen's songs by day and carousing at night in their harems, and with this the greatly intelligent English smashed the turbans of the Muslims and easily clasped the country in their arms. There was no great prowess in that, because the ten percent of Brahmans through their fabricated religious writings had denied education, knowledge, courage, sagacity and strength in religious and political affairs to the remaining ninety percent here and kept them inferior. However, after this when it came to the attention of the English that the nine-tenths Shudras and Ati-Shudras were uncivilised in nature and dull in all their work, and carried on their activities according to the dominant Brahman policy, they showed their covetousness to the greatly cunning Brahmans and left all the administration in their hands. With the aim of having sufficient funds to give all the European and Brahman employees whatever high pay and pensions they wanted so that they should at all times have valuable clothes, horses, vehicles, food and drink, the farmers who ate stale bhakri and toiled in the fields night and day were forced to pay revenue rates raised every thirty years according to the whims of the administrators. Not only this, they made a noisy show of giving education to their ignorant children and imposed on their heads a second tax burden known as the "local fund." And they (the farmers) toiling night and day with their children in the fields produce grain, cotton, opium, linseed and other crops with great labour to earn money to pay the agricultural tax and the local fund installment; and when they go onto the national highway to bring all of these to the market they find octroi stations every six miles collecting lakhs of rupees. When to overcome their adversities they go to the nearby forests to cut grass or wood or to feed their cattle and sheep, they find that all of these forests have been swallowed up by the government. There is even an octroi tax on the salt they use to make their simple bhakris palatable.

Similarly, showing superficial concern that farmers should get sufficient water for their fields to save their production and provide them with food to eat and clothes for their bodies, but having in their minds the real intention of giving great interest to the moneylenders of Europe and providing huge salaries for their European engineer countrymen, they have increased the burden of debt upon India and use lakhs of rupees of this loan to build huge canals here and there. Though they take whatever amount they want in tax from the ignorant farmers for the water of these canals, have they ever thought of an arrangement so that these employees will at least provide the water at the proper time to the

fields? Because the indifferent engineers of this Irrigation Department have given all their work to the Brahman employees, and carry on their own activities in indolence like begums in a harem. Here the cunning Brahman employees, in order to show their intelligence, whisper false stories in the ears of the engineers and get, at the time they want and in the way they want, tyrannous orders passed by the government. I shall give here one example: --

The Irrigation Department does not face any hazard if all the production of the farmers is dried up and ruined by water not flowing at the proper time. Wouldn't there be some justice in an arrangement so that all the white and black engineer bureaucrats, who swallow up thousands of rupees in pay every month, could see daily how many gallons of water are in the dam, measure it, and how much demand there is from the farmers so that the water would be sufficient to irrigate up to the end of the season? The farmers are exhausted from giving petitions to so many of the employees in that department who release the water! Finally when the farmers have gotten no water from them and they go to the cunning officials to get some response, they get a flood of arrogant words instead of water.¹³ Can this be called justice, when the government employees who beat the drums of justice take huge payments in this way for water from the weak, debt-ridden farmers but instead of giving them the water they have paid for, give only insulting speeches to the farmers out of their high-caste arrogance? In sum, our justice-loving government without any check on either its indolent or cunning employees, and without lessening at all the water tax on the farmers, makes no arrangement to see that water reaches the fields on time. As a result today the farmers' abundance has vanished and they have to auction their houses and homes to the government and leave all the money in the pockets of the pitiless employees.

Therefore our compassionate government should give to the farmer a tap for water, according to the requirements of his particular land from which he should be able to take no more water than needed. And if this is done, then the government will have no need for workers to release the water, and the money saved on them can be used to reduce the taxes taken from the farmers who use the water. And the irrigation department would not be forced to lay aside the resolution made by our thoughtful government to reduce the taxes.

In the same way, other new schemes today from the municipalities, such as the local fund, have been imposed on the uneducated farmer. The farmer is tormented all around by an octroi imposed on all the vegetables and fruits produced in his field and brought to the city.

Sometimes the farmer takes a cartful of goods to sell in the city, and after receiving the lowest price that can be given after weighing the goods by the cheating middleman in the market, paying the octroi and the cart fee charged by the municipality, he has to return home to his wife and children with only moans. In Pune city alone, today's yearly income has become equal to that of Sangli state! In the same way, the income of the huge municipality of Mumbai will not be matched by ten to twelve princely states like Pant-Sachiwar. The situation has come like a say, "outwardly it looks very nice but Ram knows what is inside." Wherever you look you can see huge paved stretching roads with gutters on both sides, everywhere on English columns the glare of lanterns, metal taps, lavatories, dump trucks and all kinds of goods collected there. However, though the previous Rajas were idol-worshippers and not wise like the English, still for the protection of their farmers they used the money of the government treasury to build huge national highways with trees on two sides; village walls; bridges; fortresses in mountains; dams in many places; canals, wells, tanks and strong water supply systems with taps and tanks in cities like Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Vijapur, Delhi and Pune; mosques and dharmashalas, toilets, water fountains and so on. Our current ultra-principled truly monotheistic English Sarkar Bahadur extracts the farmer's wealth through various means on behalf of the municipality and from this wealth, apart from finishing the above-mentioned works, gives them only the kind of education that deprives them of merit and the strength of the farmers to earn their livelihood honestly decreases day by day. It has become openly known that in these times of peace and plenty four crores¹⁴ of farmers don't get sufficient food to fill their stomachs even twice a day, and they don't see one day pass without experiencing the affliction of hunger. Truly, if our justice-loving, upright government levied appropriate taxes on the land of the illiterate farmers and gave them education and knowledge about agriculture, then they would not endanger their lives by following the ungrateful rebellious Brahmans like Peshwe, Tope, Khazgiwale, Patwardhan, Phadke¹⁵ and others. Besides, since the British Raj was established in this country, the dextrous educated people of England have begun to sell goods manufactured by machines cheaply and have placed their feet on the stomachs of all the artisans here, from the Dhors and Matangs to the Lohars and Weavers. Actually, the paddy, cotton, linseed leather and other goods produced here are sold at a cheap price to the skilled manufacturers abroad, and on this profit English merchants become millionaires.

¹³ This accusation does not apply to many gentlemen like our disinterested popular Mr. Vishwanath Daji. Such men of pure mind are found occasionally among the Brahman government employees.

¹⁴ Journal of the East India Association, No. 3, Vol. VII, page 124

¹⁵ A Sepoy Revolt, by Henry Mead, pages 133 and 134.

To sum up, for all these reasons farmer have to make toilsome efforts even to meet the expenses for their cultivation. Then they go to Marwaris and take loans for meeting the land revenue charges. Do the indolent besotted and purity-engrossed Bhat government employees who have been selected to make a detailed enquiry ever find the time to think of this? Here, in so many Sabhas filled with so many great names, the officious government native employees proclaim that “the farmers have become indebted because they spend extravagantly on marriages.” Once this illusory canard was brought to the attention of our greatly wise state secretary sitting on a carriage of four to six horses, unable to see the hollowness of the farmers’ prosperity, he removed all the customs duties on the goods manufactured by the foreign artisans! Here he showed the height of his wisdom! Without a single doubt in their minds regarding the interest of four to five crore rupees a year taken by his great merchants there, the Legislative Council here, those indolent European and pure native judges, people who have not a single idea of the extent of poverty, brought up the illusion of blocking the interest of the poor deficit native moneylenders. If the mind of the government is truly agitated about our ruined farmers, why don’t they completely stop this accumulation of billions by the English moneylenders? Wouldn’t it be better to do that and see if the farmer can find a foothold?

However, the government should not utilize this saved amount in some newly started campaign abroad or ruin the farmers by opening new banks here, so that their justice will be praised, altruistic generous men like Mr. Weatherburnsaheb should try to open the ears of the government about reducing heavily our English government’s interest payments. Because from this no party’s self-interest is served; not only that, but unless our Governor Generalsaheb sends a petition to the central government in England about reducing the pay and pensions of all the workers who earn more than 100 rupees in the military, justice, forest, police, education and other big and little government departments, the problem of the indebtedness of the farmers and of ensuring that they get food to fill their stomachs and clothes to cover their bodies will not be solved. The farmers toil along with their wives and children night and day in the fields and still, after paying the land revenue and the local fund, they do not even earn three rupees a month per person; and for the ordinary European and native government workers even 15 rupees a month will not be sufficient for trivial expenses and liquor. Then who will hear us if we talk about the unbounded expenses of the Collector and other bureaucrats who live like nabobs?

If we compare the situation of a shudra farmer owning eight bullocks together with his four or five sons and their daughters and daughters-in-law, who have to trod with one foot on top of another and toil night and day to earn without taking even a tiny loan from a Brahman, Gujar, or Marwari moneylender with the condition of an ordinary white soldier in a European battalion here, the difference will be more than that between Kashi and Rameswar. Here the Shudra farmer dresses in a loincloth with a bag for tobacco tied around his waste, a rag of a turban on his head, and goes bare-bodied and barefooted, holding the handle of the plough throughout the blazing heat of the day, singing a song as ploughs in the field with pioned remains of crops, overturning the clods of dirt; there the white soldier has pantaloons on his legs, a red broadcloth jacket to cover his body during the day, a flashy hat covered with red gilded embroidery on his head, strong and soft boots of English leather covering the cloth pajamas on his legs, a leather belt with cartridges around his waste and, with a rifle on his shoulder, does a parade for a half an hour or so at morning and evening on an airy field. Here if we are to describe the Shudra farmer's traditional court dress, it would be coarse thick khadi breeches, underwear, a cotton rug, a shawl, a dark red cotton turban and village shoes made of rope clasped on his feet. His nourishment and meal in the afternoon and evening is a dry bhakri of sorghum, nandni or a dry chappati; and vegetables of carrots or roots; there may be a sauce of dry fish, and if this is not available then there is nothing to eat with the bhakri but chatney. Even chutney and bhakri may not be available on time! Since his home is next to the bull's shed, with three calves and she-buffaloes tied there in the muck, there is a squalid smell of urine on all four sides of the house. A torn cloth or worn-out black blanket is spread for sitting or lying down; there is a pond made filthy by all the buffaloes of the village sitting in the water; beside it a well for drinking water and his toilet; this is his rural mansion. If he should get cholera or a fever he would be extremely blessed to find good medicine and a knowledgeable doctor; besides this the sword of concern about finding money to pay the land revenue and other funds and taxes is hanging over his head. Would any skilful white or black doctor put his hand on his heart and vow that the mind of such a luckless farmer would not become numbed?

In contrast, the government buys and brings from England high quality clothes, broadcloth, handkerchiefs, slippers and boots for the white soldier's clothes, and provides here for his food superior wheat, rice, lentils, mutton of sheep or goats, a healthy young cow, etc. and good quality liquor like English port, unadulterated oil, ghee, milk, sugar, tea, salt, chillies, spices, a knife and fork, etc. and then they get a Christian acharya to approve its

fresh packaging and feed him every day on time. For his residence the government spends lakhs of rupees to build imposing two-story barracks, which have iron cots, bedspreads and pillows, woollen coverlets and a lamp hanging above for light. On the veranda of the barracks, a bathroom is made with a `filter' for the bathwater. In the same way a clean convenient toilet is made. If, in spite of this, a few coughs or fevers should come due to indigestion, there is a clinic ready with medicine worth hundreds of rupees, equipment and a doctor paid thousands of rupees every month ready to serve him; and a porter is kept at his service along with a carriage. Along with this, he has no worry about gifts or demands, about maintaining a house, toilet, trees, water, roads, fields and paying the local fund; and no care at all about natural or gang-related political calamities. And from all this, we say with condemnation to our pure native employees making the indolent Europeans happy, taking bribes from the ignorant farmers, see this native worker! What is this prodigality? What shall we call it? Really, the English government which prays to the formless God with closed eyes here should pay absolutely no attention to the rosy writings in the newspapers or the Samajes created by the cunning Brahmans, and instead heavily reduce the unlimited pay of the white and black employees in government departments and give education to the Shudra farmers caught in ignorance and weakness; and if they do not lessen the burden of the land revenue, tolls and other payments, in a short time the result of this will be very terrible. Saying this in the ears of our indolent extravagant government, I end the chapter.

Chapter 5

Our suggestions to the Arya Bhat-Brahmans regarding the Shudra farmers and the remedies which the current government should follow: --

Before beginning this final chapter, I would like to make some suggestions to the greatly cunning Arya Bhat-Brahmans of the country, with the aim that they should not obstruct these matters. I would ask God that not only our learned foreign government, but our domestic ignorant “Dasyu” Shudra brothers, should open their eyes and become conscious of the situation. These days these stalwarts of purity have been hiding their sword of religion, with all the ritual weapons that cut the throats of all the creatures of God, under the guise of being great lovers of swadeshi, and without even a glance towards the Mahars and Mangs, have been telling the frolicsome promising offspring of Shudras, Parsis and Muslims through their books, newspapers, Sabhas and similar methods that they should put aside all grumbling about the hierarchies and distinctions among those in the country and become united; and without becoming one, this unfortunate country will never make progress. Such is the instruction they give us. I am making a small effort here so that the illiterate farmers will not listen to this and carry out any adverse actions. On that lies their fate.

From that day that the forefathers of the cunning Bhat-Brahmans won superiority over the (Dasyu) Shudras on the strength of their skills of archery and imposed their harsh regime on them, for their own self-interest they have kept the defeated (Dasyu) Shudras ignorant for thousands of years to this very day. As a result the Shudra farmers have forgotten their basic human rights. Then, because they began to have faith in those self-interested artificial religious books which began to be considered holy like the Buddhist, Muslim and Christian sacred books propounding a universal human religion, all the Shudras became subject to the Brahmans, and scorning the true religions of other human beings, began to consider it a sacred duty to slander them. As a result they began to behave towards them with all kinds of perfidy, even feeling that to do so was their right. And so that the Shudras should not have even the slightest doubt of the Brahmans' perfidiousness, it was said that this was the Shudras' dharma, and the propaganda started then goes on until this day.

Since the foreign English government and their indolent luxury-loving white employees are misinformed in every way about the true deformity, they have not been able to

manage things properly. Thus the situation of each and every Shudra farmer has sunk to a pitiable level. Still, with the intention of getting all kinds of important labour done by the farmers and keeping them addicted, the Brahmans have always given the advice in their Sabhas, their newspapers and their books that “unless the Shudra farmers always keep their loyalty to the Brahmans and maintain unity with them, there will be no progress in this unfortunate country.” They seem to have only the intention of deception through their hollow advice in bluffing the ignorant Shudra farmers and giving this notion of progress. The ancestors of the Brahmans, considering themselves Bhoodevas in the intoxication of their power, began to treat the helpless Shudra farmers as slaves, and this extremely base practice has been consciously continued through various means up to this day. Then how can farmers unite with such alien Brahmans?

The great majestic Dr. Franklin and Thomas Paine and other leading gentlemen, labouring constantly night and day, have through the power of learning helped the artisans and the skilled Americans in industry to go ahead of the manufacturers in all the countries of Europe, earning crores of rupees every year. In order that such knowledge should not be given to the Shudra farmers, the ancestors of the Brahmans, in the intoxication of their superiority, wrote extremely forbidding articles in their self-interested books. As a result the knowledge of archery and other military skills stagnated in this country. We see by our own eyes that so many youth of the Shindes, Holkars and other great houses of today sit on excellent horses and make a great show of their skill with spears; however these unfortunates are like mooing cows as far as the knowledge of how to use binoculars or how to forge cannonballs is concerned! Twisting their turbans and ruining the reputation of their fathers, they have only become a great weight on the chest of the Shudra farmers and a burden to the earth itself. Because of this, so many times the “French,” “Portugese,” “Muslims” and other greedy conquistadors have swept into this country and taken away immense wealth to their own lands; so many have also humiliated the self-interested religion of the Brahmans. Finally so many god-fearing Muslims finally took possession of thousands of Bhat-Brahmans, circumcizing them one after another and carrying them into their humane religion. However during all this time they kept permanent the ban in their Sanksrit schools on teaching knowledge to the children of the Shudra farmers. How can farmers unite with such Brahmans?

Now, if we observe the process of nature, it will be seen that aside from knowledge, humans and all other animals are basically alike in their nature. Animals need food, sleep

and sexual intercourse; they raise their young, protect themselves from their enemies and understand nothing aside from belching after they have eaten and since there is not a speck of change in this constant behavior of theirs, there is no upheaval or basic change in their original condition. However, one marvellous speciality in the nature of human beings is a specific intelligence. With its help, they have won superiority over all the fish, animals, birds, insects and other creatures; and with this intelligence they have invented the system of writing to put their thoughts down on paper. After this, since the people of the continents all around have kept note of all their experiences up to today, there has grown up a huge mass of experienced knowledge in the world, and with the help of this experiential knowledge and their intelligence, the Europeans send their important messages through telegraph wires thousands of miles to inform each other and bring lakhs of tons of grain by boat and train in the time of drought to save each other. And in the midst of such intelligent human beings, the Shudra Shivaji has brought to ruin the Muslim Badshah who worships one god and advised the farmers to take care of all the cows and the Brahmans and their self-interested religion! Remembering this, the ungrateful Peshwa servants of the completely illiterate Shudra Shivaji kept his illiterate heirs imprisoned in the Satara fort and made the cruel and heartless Trimbakji Dengale an informant. So they established the regime of their Arya Bhat-Brahman jati fellows in Pune city, distributing great gifts of rupees and gold to Brahmans and doing the play of the Black Krishna by night and day, punishing people of the Shimpi and other castes along with the Shudra farmers if they dared to wear long dhotis like the Brahmans. Not only that, the Bhat-Brahmans today consider the urine of the cows who eat the shit of farmers to be holy and become purified by that. And these Bhat-Brahmans on the strength of their self-interested religion²⁷ consider the Shudra farmers to be inferior. How can farmers have unity with such Brahmans?

Even though so many among the Arya-Brahmans have faced punishment of forced labour in prison for false papers, counterfeit notes and bribery, and even though so many dine on (untouchable) “Mang” women’s degraded food of meat and liquor under the pretence of the “Shakta” cult, still they consider Shudra rulers such as the Bhosles, Holkars and Shindes to be inferior and refuse to inter-dine with them. Most Bhat-Brahmans do all kinds of despicable practices with the “impure” women of their villages, and yet these same Arya

²⁷ Sir William Jones, Vol II, page 224. It is indeed a system of despotism and priestcraft, both limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mutual support, though with mutual checks; it is filled with strange conceits in metaphysics and natural philosophy, with idle superstitions and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative and consequently liable to dangerous misconceptions; it abounds with minute and childish formalities with ceremonies generally absurd and often ridiculous.

Bhats consider it a sin to exchange daughters with upright Shudra farmers; on this basis claiming that there can be any unity between farmers and Brahmins is like saying that "Z" comes before "A"?

All Bhat-Brahmins refuse to let the Shudra farmers even touch the stone and metal idols in their temples, nor even come near them; they don't let them sit and eat next to them; they give them the leftover ghee from their plates and get up. With this, how can farmers have unity with such Brahmins?

When the selfless disciples of Hazrat Muhammad Paigambar set foot in this country, on the basis of the strength of their holy monotheistic religion they began to expose the sham of the Arya Bhat's self-interested religion. When some Shudras with great enthusiasm began to accept the Muslim religion, the greatly cunning Mukundraj Bhat used a few Sanskrit quotations and applied some gilded coating to a bit of atheistic opinion and used this trickery to make a Prakrit book called Viveksindu to put before the remaining illiterate Shudras; and until the time of the establishment of the English regime, the Arya Bhats told the farmers stories from their barren Bharat and Ramayana and got them addicted to warring against the Muslims, but they never allowed the illiterate farmers to think of educating their children along with the Muslims. Because of this when the English regime got established, naturally all the great important positions in the government departments were taken by the Arya Brahmins, and they began to devour the farmers on all sides. And though the Arya Bhats considered the English and European people to be as inferior as Mahars and Mangs, still those Vedas created by their hugely cunning ancestors, the Vedas which they called supremely holy, the Vedas whose tail could not even be seen by the Shudra farmers, those Vedas hidden under veils of purity are taught today by their fat learned men wandering from house to house of the Mlecchas. However, these same Bhat-Brahmins have not even the smallest inclination to give some elementary education to the ignorant children of the Shudra farmers in the government schools in the villages. How can farmers have unity with such Brahmins?

If the children of farmers who migrated to the big cities begin to get a little education with the help of all the religious missionaries among the Europeans, and if by some oversight due to the compassion of white bureaucrats they are given an official post, all the Bhat workers in the office will tell all kinds of slanders about them to the white employees and finally get them thrown out of work; and so many Bhat employees try to please their white

employee superiors by telling them such an abundance of absurd fantastic stories about the ignorant farmers' crops, laying all kinds of obstacles in the way of the farmers' getting justice, and so make them shiver with fear. How can the farmers have unity with such Brahmans?

All the Vaidiks, Shastris, myth-makers and storytelling Bhat-Bhiksuks among the Arya Brahmans, using all kinds of opportunities to tell the tumultuous patter of their empty religion to the Bhosles, Shindes, Holkars and other rulers who have risen from the ignorant Shudra farmers, continuously call them "patron" and grab from them hundreds of Brahman feasts, gifts of cows and other religious donations daily. But the representatives and secretaries of the Bhat-Brahman caste or the Sanglikars and other Brahman princes never feed even a simple meal to their patron Shudra farmers, pray to them or take their blessing, even in times of drought. And most of the learned Brahmans among them take thousands of rupees yearly allowance from Gaikwad and other Shudra ruling princes while none among the Brahman ruling princes remembering such daily grabbing has ever given clothes to a farmer boy and gotten him educated. How can farmers have unity with such Brahmans?

In the house of all the rich Brahmans, the Brahman beggars daily have their choice of food like rice being distributed, while the Shudra and Muslim beggars are lucky to be given a pinch of jawar, if they are not told to go away. Compared to the Arya Bhat-Brahmans, shouldn't the mlechha Europeans like Judge Thackersaheb from foreign countries and foreign religions who distributelakhs of rupees be called compassionate? He has fed from his own earnings many orphaned Brahman and Shudra children and educated them in English, they can now match the white employees and exchange government bills. Oh, that is what we mean by understanding! That is what we mean by graciousness! That is what we mean by avour! Otherwise, the Arya Bhat-Brahmans say one thing for the purposes of their work, and when that work is done, "you in your place and I in mine." According to the world-famous saying, "you eat your seed and plant mine," the Bhat-Brahmans will get the expansive benefit. The Arya educated people who really want to unite all the people and truly help this country to make progress should first drown their evil religion which they propagate among the victorious and among the conquered. And unless they dance on the chest of casteism along with their Vedanta and, without making distinction among persons, leave aside their cruelty and began to behave purely and honestly in the presence of the Shudras and Ati-Shudras, there can be no true unity and no true progress of the country.

However, even if the Arya-Bhats, with their hereditary cunning, should hold hands with fifty to a hundred half-educated Shudras and make a temporary unity with all the people of the country for limited purposes and achieve a momentary progress, this will not last for long. My prediction is that if the Bhat-Brahmans absorb a few meddling people from among the Shudras who start becoming yes-men to these belly gods, like setting up a framework for ripening fruit that breaks off the young raw mangoes, this will only mean destroying the valuable mangoes along with them, and in doing this all the capable Shudras will have to keep their heads bent. I explicitly ask them to keep this prediction in the mouths of the gods in their temples.

Now I will take some rest in the cool air of the pleasant Simla hills and make some suggestions to our supremely compassionate Governor Generalsahib in the restful atmosphere, calling upon the name of the government beyond our seas, for reforming the condition of the Shudra farmers.

Now, unless our moral religious government, putting aside its greed for wealth, appoints some detective doctors to keep their eyes on the farmers' behavior and give them some punishment if they do low acts of theft or dissoluteness, and controls the undisciplined behavior which is destroying the farmers' health, they will not become moral. The lineage of the Shudra farmers will not become strong unless there is a law forbidding them from arranging child marriages or taking more than one wife. Because the white government employees are misinformed about everything, and let the Bhat-Brahmans hold government positions greater than their proportion in the population, these never have to face the situation of working in the mud of the villages to cultivate the fields or sending their wives on fruitless errands to the bazaar in the middle of the day to fill their stomachs. Besides, since the farmers are ignorant, the Bhat-Brahmans get endless benefits from caste differences. The Brahman puraniks, story-tellers and teachers in the schools along with the government employees work night and day with all their shrewdness to prevent the breaking of caste differences. In reality, until the children of farmers become capable of taking charge of the government administration, Brahmans should not be given governmental positions beyond the proportion of their caste, and the remaining governmental posts should be given to Muslims or British people in India. Unless this is done they (the Brahmans) will not stop obstructing the education of the farmers. Since they occupy nearly all the government posts, any means of bringing their cruelty to the attention of the white bureaucrats has been closed. Because of this, only the Brahman caste becomes learned and wealthy, and the Shudra

farmers who toil on meager food and clothing sometimes become blind followers giving their lives for Brahmans by joining in their revolts. Along with this, the Bhat-Brahmans have made such an impression of their cruel religion on the Shudra farmers that they consider it a merit to bear the punishment for the murders or crimes they have done upon the Brahmans' urging, without mentioning the names of the Brahmans. Because of that any labour spent on the police or justice department is wasted.

In order to make the children of the Shudra farmers truly educated, teachers of their own caste should be appointed, who can themselves demonstrate how to use the plough, weeding and sowing instruments, and laws should make it compulsory to send their children to school. For the first few years the examination given to them should be simple, giving them as incentive the degree equivalent to those of the Brahmans' children. And there should be no tyranny of alien castes regarding the marriage ceremonies for the weddings of their children. Without such controls, no relish for education will develop among the Shudras. Then, the children of the Shudra villagers who show their merit by passing examinations in using the plough, weeding and sowing instruments along with the Marathi sixth standard should be given the headmanship rights in the village. When our compassionate government makes such laws, thousands of farmers will gladly send their children to school in the competition to win headman rights. And, once there are such educated and meritorious Patils in every village, all the cunning Bhat-Kulkarnis in the rural areas will not be able to entice the ignorant farmers into mutual quarrels, and there will be such excessive benefit from this for the farmers and the government that in a short time the farmers will gain the capacity to provide even higher land revenue than today. And the police and justice departments which have been so senselessly bloated can be easily minimized. Along with this, the government should realize that the Bhat-Brahmans are absolutely incapable of doing the administrative work in Hindustan, and as the Shudra farmers become educated in the government schools, they should be given all the big and little official positions in the government offices. Without teaching them such work, without the farmers getting a shelter for their feet, the government revenue will never be increased. These days our government has fixed its gaze upon the perfidiousness of the Gujaratis' and Marwaris' moneylending, but even more than this they should attend to their practices of keeping false measures and rotting goods in the stores and to the drunken Patils.

Now I will make some suggestions for improving the agriculture of the barren fields of the illiterate, ignorant farmers:

Our compassionate government should give to all farmers the knowledge to do equivalent to that of European farmers, and until they gain the understanding sufficient to do mechanical agriculture like them, at present instead of the Muslims and others including all white people killing calves, bulls and cows for eating beef, they should eat mutton from sheep and goats here, or they should buy cattle from abroad to eat for beef. Without the enforcement of such a law, the bullocks of the Shudra farmers here will be insufficient to plough their fields, and they and the government will not get the benefit of their manure for fertilizer. The decomposed leaves and flowers of all the grass and trees on the hills and mountains should be compososted together with decomposed dead insects and beasts and their bones. After heaving raining, so that the water should not simply flow into the streams and rivers and get washed away, our industrious government should bring the police and all the white and black soldiers to build small embankments from place to place to that the water can get channeled first to the fields and then sent to rivers and streams. If this is done the fields will become very productive and at the same time the soldiers in the army will get the habit of industrious work in open air and will become strong and free from disease. By making them work worth one anna's worth every day, the government's revenue will increase more than 25 lakhs a year. Because these days there are around two lakhs of soldiers along with the police at the command of our alert government.

Similarly, our compassionate government should build as many tanks and ponds as it can, and in the most convenient way, in the valleys and gullies of mountains and hills. In this way, even in the middle of the summer there will be water to supplement the streams of the countryside below, and with small and big dams everywhere there will be water to fill all the wells. And all the area will become irrigated and the government along with the farmers will benefit. In order to prevent the fields from become eroded and barren, the government should regulate the bandhs on the side of the watershed area.

Our compassionate government should do a survey of all the fields in the province, using water-diviners to discover sources where there is water and to get a rough calculation, and marking all those places and noting them on the maps of the villages, only without the help of the government along with the water diviners showing the path. Awards should be given to the Shudra farmers who dig wells and make embankments; and all the silt in the

rivers, canals and reservoirs should given free of charge as before to the farmers. Finally, the government should return all the grazing land of the villages that it has turned into “forest” and give it freely with only a strict law that wood should not be cut for selling but for fuel for cooking and burning the fields, and so make a holi of (burn up) the tyrannical Forest Department. Our government with its own exertions, should undertake a little expense from the treasury and purchase various types of fine goats and sheep from abroad and bring them to this country so that along with increasing production here, they will provide from their urine and excreta high quality fertiliser in such quantity that the fields will become very productive, and the Shudra farmers will get great benefit. If the government does not have the courage to let the farmers keep their pompous old rifles to protect their fields from wild animals in the government forests, then it should assign black police to do this work. All the losses caused by wild pigs and other animals eating up the produce of the fields should be cut from the pay of the high officials of the Police Department or taken from the government treasury and given to the farmers as compensation. Without the benefit of this the farmers will not be able to sleep at night and work industriously during the day. This is called, “I can’t do it and cannot bear it if you do it”!

If our compassionate government truly takes it to heart to increase production by seeing to the welfare of the ignorant Shudra farmers, then every year during the month of Shravan they should organize exhibits and during the month of Ashwin give tests on driving ploughs and on various crops and give prizes to the top farmers. Every three years they should give titles to the top farmers, and in order that the educated children of farmers should carry on their agriculture in a superior manner, the government should give some minor examinations in iron work and woodwork, and send them on its own expenses to survey agricultural schools abroad so that agriculture here can be immediately improved and they can be happy. Our moral government should keep a close eye on all the Jogtins, Muralis, Aradhinis, Kolhatins and Kasbins and maintain a locked hospital for them in every taluka, and so that the Kolhatins, Tamashawallas, dramatists etc should not sing improper songs; without this the health and morality of the ignorant Shudra farmers will not improve. With a big recruitment of Shudra and Ati-Shudra farmers in the military and police departments of all provinces, they are competing with the tough people of “Egypt” and “Kabul” and beginning to match the white soldiers’ courage and power.

All the Shudra and Ati-Shudra farmers along with their wives and children toiling on the fields night and day give crores of rupees to the government in taxes, cesses, funds and

octroi every year. However, our religion-loving government does not give any suggestions or knowledge or material to read regarding agriculture to the Shudra farmers' children either in books or in articles in the vernacular press. And since hundreds of thousands of farming families have fallen into difficulty getting even bhakri to eat on time or clothes to cover their body, all our law-abiding government does in the name of their happiness and protection is to give huge pay and pensions to the employees of their military, justice and revenue departments, and extracts excessive wealth from the farmers; what shall we call that!! So many spoiled children of our government, the black and white government employees, eat thousands of rupees in pay every month and after thirty to thirty-five years, they get hundreds of rupees pension every month. When most black government employees make a show of being too weak and blind to do the work of the government offices, they throw dirt in the eyes of the numerous European doctors to live off their pensions; the white pensioners bolt for England and many of the black pensioners, as if they have risen from the dead like Jesus Christ Yogi Maharaj rising from the dead, regain their youth, and giving a black die to their mustaches, and take highly paid jobs in the municipalities or offices of merchants earning thousands of rupees to fill their bowls. Our alert government should, without a change in the meager pay of the military soldiers, ironsmiths and carpenters for construction, slowly reduce the extremely excessive pay and pensions of all the remaining great black and white employees in all the departments. Without considering these things I have written, the current starving condition of the illiterate farmers will never end, and the foundation of the government's rule in this country will not become firmly established.

In sum, I have not written in any chapter of Asud about the great princely rulers or the ignorant small estate-holders among the Shudras, and have said nothing about the humiliating situation of the Ati-Shudras. The reason is that the first due to their hollow glory and the second due to their misfortune have become alienated from the Shudra farmers. Here I have only given some solid points for a clumsy description of the situation of the lower and middle-class farmers in order to inform the Governorsaheb in the cities and the regime of the Governor Generalsaheb here as well as our excellent English government beyond the seas. Even after all this, if it is truly the desire of our government that it should be given the last gulp of water before death from the hands of Brahmans' children, then they can continue to spend huge sums every year to educate the children of the Brahmans from the Royal Fund which is collected from the crushed bones of the Shudra farmers. I am not saying anything

about that at present.²⁸ However, if they at least begin to spend all the local funds collected under the bluff of educating the farmers' children to give them credible (honest) education, I will very happily consider this the fruit of the many days labour I have spent. However if this is not done they will all be responsible to the God.

I remember with gratitude my debts to my neighboring Muslim playmates, who first gave me when I was young a true idea of the self-interested nature of the Hindu religion and its many false ideas such as casteism. After that I remember the Scottish mission in Pune and the government institution which I got a bit of knowledge from due to their help and began to understand what human rights are; and those European gentlemen of religion who gave financial help to them. And I express my gratitude to the government for the independent political system of the English which made it possible for me to fearlessly put forward my thoughts, and praying to all natural powers that my unfortunate ignorant Shudra farmers' eyes should be opened and that they should come to consciousness, that they should be inspired, holding on to this hope with fortitude, for the present I sit quietly to see who will turn around due to the blows of this my Asud.

28 July 1883, Pune, Junaganjpeth,
Jotirao Govindrao Phule, Member, Satyashodhak Samaj

²⁸ A Sepoy Revolt, by Henry Mead, pages 69 and 235